

Clallam-Bay/Seki Wastewater Infrastructure Needs



Figure 1: The unincorporated community of Clallam Bay/Seki is in Clallam County, on Clallam Bay and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

More information

Ecology spoke with Clallam County to gather a representative example of small community wastewater infrastructure needs. As of the 2010 census, Clallam Bay had a population of 363 and Seki had a population of 27; the community's infrastructure serves about 400.

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ADA Accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Emma Hanson (details above), or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility> for relay service or TTY call 711 or (877) 833-6341.

Community vision

Clallam Bay/Seki was first settled in 1879 and salmon canning, leather tanning and logging were early industries in the area. Currently, Clallam Bay/Seki has a small year-round population and is known primarily as a summer tourist destination for fishing, kayaking, birdwatching and diving. The main employers are fishing tourism and a state prison.

Existing wastewater infrastructure

The Clallam Bay-Seki (CBSK) sewer system built by the County in 1976. The system hosts two wastewater treatment plants and a sewer collection system serving 327 customers. The nearby prison has its own wastewater treatment lagoon system. Most of the equipment at the lift stations and at the Clallam Bay and Seki wastewater treatment plants are 35 to 40 years old and well past their useful service life. The system's general sewer plan was last updated in 2018, which included smoke tests, camera inventorying, and flow monitoring to identify needed upgrades.

The County is committed to improving water quality in the lower Clallam River and Clallam Bay, and is currently working towards improving Clallam Bay-Seki's wastewater infrastructure through:

- Replacement of existing sewer collection infrastructure, including sanitary sewers, manholes, and side sewer connections; and
- Analyzing the aging wastewater collection and treatment facilities and planning affordable, reasonable solutions to maintain working systems. Multiple solutions to the aging plants were identified in 2018 plan. Options included: replacing both, replacing one, or building brand new.

Photos of existing infrastructure



Figure 2: Clallam Bay-Sekiu wastewater treatment infrastructure sits adjacent to Clallam Bay.

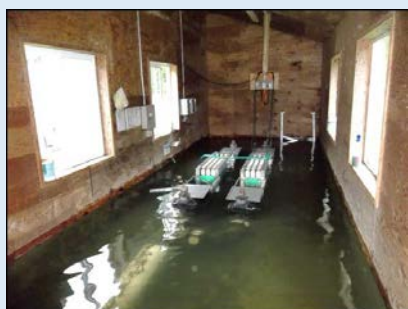


Figure 3: The Clallam Bay-Sekiu's ultraviolet treatment system was flooded in 2017.

Needed wastewater infrastructure

The County is scheduled to finish planning for alternative wastewater collection and treatment facilities in mid-2021, and will then apply for design and construction funding. At the moment, the County's only existing alternative recommendation is to shutter both the plants and rebuild a new plant out of the flood zone, with an estimated cost of \$35 million. This cost is quite high compared to the current system size, revenue, and median household income. The County hopes to identify alternatives in the ballpark of \$20 million or less.

In addition to financial assistance, Ecology can assist in coordinating potential alternatives with the prison.

Fiscal standing

Debt

The County will have an estimated \$1.9 million debt to Ecology for a loan for the replacement of existing sewer collection infrastructure. Repayment will begin in 2025 for 20 years.

Funding sources

The residential sewer rate is a base \$51 per month and the commercial rate is a base \$56.50 per month. There is an ongoing subsidy from the County to fund the operations and maintenance of the CBSK sewer system. The County wants to improve the rate structure to create a self-sufficient sewer utility. The County will need to conduct an internal rate review with some assistance from RCAC, to support a rate update ordinance, public hearing, and adoption by the Board of Commissioners.

Public involvement

The County involves the public in the infiltration and inflow repair and replacement project through meetings with the sewer advisory board and County Commissioners.